

Claims

I claim:

1           1. A method for treating a patient suffering from an autoimmune disorder,  
2           said method comprising administering an effective amount of an antibody  
3           composition, wherein said antibody composition comprises anti-idiotypic antibodies,  
4           or antigen binding fragments thereof, which can bind to and inhibit self-reactive  
5           pathogenic autoantibodies present in the patient.

1           2. The method, according to claim 1, wherein said autoimmune disorder is  
2           characterized by the destruction of patients' cells by autoantibodies.

1           3. The method, according to claim 2, wherein said anti-idiotypic antibodies are  
2           immunoreactive with idiotypic determinants present on antibodies associated with an  
3           autoimmune disease selected from the group comprising systemic lupus  
4           erythematosus, masthenia gravis, and idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura.

1           4. The method, according to claim 3, wherein said anti-idiotypic antibodies are  
2           immunoreactive with anti-DNA antibodies.

1           5. The method, according to claim 4, wherein said anti-idiotypic antibodies are  
2           immunoreactive with idiotypic determinants present on said anti-DNA antibodies,  
3           wherein said idiotypic determinants are selected from the group consisting of F4, 3L,  
4           8.12, and 16/6.

1           6. The method, according to claim 1, wherein said antibody composition is  
2           administered intravenously.

1 7. The method, according to claim 6, wherein said antibody composition is  
2 administered as a dextrose saline solution.

1 8. A method for preparing an antibody composition comprising anti-idiotypic  
2 antibodies, comprising the steps of:

3 (a) contacting pooled gamma globulin with a solid phase substrate, said  
4 substrate comprising an idiotypic determinant of a self-reactive pathogenic  
5 autoantibody, wherein said anti-idiotypic antibodies present in said pooled gamma  
6 globulin bind to said idiotypic determinant; and

7 (b) eluting said anti-idiotypic antibodies bound to said idiotypic determinant.

1 9. The method, according to claim 8, wherein said idiotypic determinant is  
2 expressed on an antibody coupled to said substrate

1 10. The method according to claim 9 wherein said antibody coupled to said  
2 substrate expresses anti-DNA idiotypic determinants selected from the group  
3 consisting of F4, 3I, 8.12 and 16/6.

1 11. The method according to claim 8 further comprising washing said  
2 substrate with a suitable wash buffer prior to eluting in Step (b).

1 12. The method, according to claim 8, wherein said substrate comprises a  
2 plurality of idiotypic determinants of self-reactive pathogenic autoantibody.

1 13. The method, according to claim 8, wherein said idiotypic determinant  
2 comprises a synthetic peptide that duplicates an idiotypic determinant present on a  
3 self-reactive autoantibody.

15. The antibody composition, according to claim 14, wherein said anti-idiotypic antibodies are immunoreactive with idiotype determinants present on antibodies associated with an autoimmune disease selected from the group comprising systemic lupus erythematosus, masthenia gravis, and idiopathic thrombocytopenic purpura.

17. The antibody composition, according to claim 16, wherein said anti-idiotypic antibodies are immunoreactive with idiotypic determinants present on said anti-DNA antibodies, wherein said idiotypic determinants are selected from the group consisting of F4, 3L, 8.12, and 16/6.